

NORTHGATE STAKEHOLDERS GROUP DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

**North Seattle Community College
ED 2843A in the Dr. Peter Ku Education Building
Tuesday, May 9, 2006, 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm**

The Northgate Stakeholders Group (Group) held its nineteenth meeting at North Seattle Community College on Tuesday, May 9 from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm. The purposes of the meeting were to:

- Approve meeting summary #18;
- Hear an overview and discuss process for drafting final Stakeholder advice on the draft Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan (CTIP) and draft environmental impact statement (EIS);
- Review the 60% design for the Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel;
- Hear a report on the art proposed for the Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel;
- Hear project updates on South Lot, Northgate Mall, Wallace development and construction activity; and
- Hear an overview of potential future issues and projects at Northgate and next steps for Stakeholders' input on their future involvement.

Welcome

Ron LaFayette, Chair, convened the meeting at 4:05 pm, welcomed Stakeholders and observers to the meeting, and provided a brief overview of the meeting agenda.

Northgate Status Report

Jackie Kirn of the Office of Policy and Management briefly reviewed a written status report (handout) on projects and activities in the Northgate area in the following categories:

1. Events
 - a. South Lot Groundbreaking – anticipated early June, details to be announced
 - b. Construction information public meeting – Tuesday, May 23 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., NSCC Cafeteria
 - c. Ribbon Cutting – Northgate Library, Park and Community Center and 5th Ave. NE Streetscape Improvements – Saturday, July 15, noon
2. Contracts and legislation
 - a. May 15 – anticipate Seattle City Council approval of
 - i. Northgate South Commons contract rezone
 - ii. Legislation to allow south lot reconfiguration and easements
 - iii. Legislation to allow new 3rd Ave. NE street to be established
 - b. June 1 – SPU to complete two South Lot construction contracts; one, with the grading contractor, and another with Lorig and ERA Care
 - c. June (dates to be determined) – anticipate legislation:

- i. Approving purchase of future park site at 5th Ave. NE and NE 112th St Park and Ride site. Ms. Kirn noted that the full park planning process was anticipated to begin in 2007.
 - ii. Authorizing SDOT to acquire right-of-way for CTIP improvements (pedestrian improvements and additional turn lane) at 5th Ave. NE and Northgate Way
 - iii. Approving Section 108 loan to Northgate Commons
 - iv. Approving multi-family tax exemption for Northgate Commons
3. Maple Leaf Community Garden – construction underway
4. A member added that Pinehurst Pocket Park will go to bid in July. Ms. Kirn said she would add that to the next Northgate Status Report.
5. Lorna Mrachek announced that the Northgate Arts Council would have its first public poetry reading on May 21.
6. King County Transit-Oriented Development – Seattle Housing Authority is evaluating the feasibility of and options for a potential development project on the Northgate Park and Ride Lot (anticipated in June)

Ron Posthuma provided detail about the King County Transit-Oriented Development:

- Shared use parking with Lorig and Simon was approved.
- Negotiations with Lorig are complete.
- Simons has experienced cost overruns on the mall parking garage project and may be unable to proceed with the shared use parking arrangement.
- In case Simon is unable to proceed, King County has accelerated the process of contacting potential developers for the property just east of the transit center. Housing appears to be a good use for the property because residents would tend to drive away during commuter hours.
- Seattle Housing Authority and other organizations have expressed interest in doing a mixed income development.
- Seattle Housing Authority said it would be willing to share parking.

If Simon proceeds with the parking garage, Mr. Posthuma confirmed that King County would go forward with the shared use parking. In that case, development of the east property might proceed at a slower pace. He emphasized the County's commitment to making the shared use parking arrangement work.

Approval of the January 24, 2006 Meeting Summary

There were no corrections or additions to the draft summary of the January 24, 2006 meeting, so it was approved as drafted.

Overview of CTIP and Draft EIS and Discussion of Process for Final Advice

The Chair introduced David Harrison, facilitator, to lead the discussion on CTIP. Mr. Harrison noted the attendance of Susan Sanchez, policy director of Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), and thanked her for allowing Tony Mazzella to provide his services to CTIP and the Stakeholders Group.

Mr. Harrison explained that the present discussion was intended to prepare the Stakeholders for the next two months of work related to CTIP. He outlined the next steps for developing final advice on CTIP (copies of the CTIP PowerPoint presentation were in Stakeholder packets):

- Community Forum, June 8
- Close of public comment period
- Stakeholder review of public comments
- Two CTIP subcommittee meetings
- Draft CTIP advice at June 15 Stakeholder meeting [this meeting was later cancelled]
- Finalize CTIP advice at June 27 Stakeholder meeting

Question: When does the final advice have to be submitted? We just got the materials. What happens if we are not ready to finalize advice on June 27?

Response (Harrison): If two subcommittee meetings will be insufficient, the preference would be to add subcommittee meetings without changing the date for finalizing the advice.

Tony Mazzella reported that the draft CTIP had been officially released the day before. He recalled that Stakeholders had provided advice at two critical junctures: 1) when the planning, policy and technical assumptions were being developed, and 2) when the evaluation criteria were being developed.

Mr. Mazzella reviewed the major recommendations of the draft CTIP:

- Implement more non-motorized options
- Address safety needs and congestion
- Improve transit
- Manage parking more efficiently

He then discussed some of the projects and programs proposed to implement the major recommendations and the proposed finance and implementation strategies.

Mr. Mazzella reviewed the cost estimates for all of the CTIP priorities. He also reviewed estimates of Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) funds that would be available over 25 years and the sources of that funding. The estimates of available funding were based on historical trends in funding and what the City of Seattle could reasonably be expected to spend on transportation in Northgate.

Mr. Mazzella noted that sources of federal funding changed over time. He mentioned new federal grant funding to improve school walking routes as an example. He said that the City was developing an alternative mitigation program to which developers could choose to contribute.

The program would allow the City to apply mitigation funding to CTIP priorities anywhere within the CTIP boundaries. Mr. Mazzella said the program would be up and running by the end of the year and that by then the City would know roughly how much money would be available through the program.

Mr. Mazzella said that in the fall the City would propose a City-wide local transportation funding package of bonds and levies. Much of the funding would go toward maintenance but that there would be opportunities to fund new projects as well. He said the funding package was fundamental to achieving the Northgate vision.

Ms. Kirn urged the Stakeholders to review Chapter 8 of the draft CTIP on financing and implementation because it describes the funding and decision-making process for transportation projects. She explained that the City didn't have a prescription for funding, but that the draft CTIP tried to show the on-going relationship between the City and the community for securing funding and prioritizing projects. She also noted that transportation projects by Sound Transit, King County, the Washington State Department of Transportation and other public entities could benefit the Northgate area. Finally, she said that CTIP was a long-term blueprint and that it would take some time for Northgate to change from a suburban land use form to an urban center.

Mr. Mazzella emphasized that, as a clear set of priorities from the community, CTIP was a powerful tool for implementing capital improvement projects. He noted that some proposed CTIP projects were already underway, such as construction on NE 9th St. and design for the 3rd Ave. NE project to connect NE 100th St. to NE 103rd ST.

Mr. Mazzella briefly reviewed the purpose of the Draft EIS. He explained that it was a programmatic EIS; individual projects would be subject to an environmental review process before they would be implemented. He noted that there was a 45 day comment period for the DEIS and that all comments should be received by June 22.

Ron Posthuma briefly described a new proposal from King County for a small tax increase that would fund King County Metro service, including some projects. He passed out informational flyers and asked the Stakeholders to submit comments.

Comments/Questions/Responses

Question: At a meeting of the National League of Cities in Washington, D.C., I learned that the federal government didn't have any more money for local transportation projects. Since Seattle will be requesting massive amounts of money for the viaduct, how does the lack of federal funding fit into your budget projections for CTIP?

Response (Tony Mazzella): The City receives federal money on an annual basis via grant applications and awards. We don't anticipate our budget projections to be eroded over the next 25 years because of the current federal budget situation. We feel that our projections are solid. Federal funding is only one of the sources for these projects.

Question: What has the percentage of federal funding been historically?

Response (Tony Mazzella): I don't know at this moment, but we can break out the past history.

Response (Susan Sanchez): Although we don't have a way of knowing what the federal proportion will be in the future, we do know that they are a source of funding that the

City pursues aggressively. We always look at how our projects fit within new and evolving federal funding opportunities. We also look for partnering opportunities with other agencies, which can be a benefit for grant applications. It is also helpful to be ready with priorities, as we are with CTIP.

Comment: This is a fantastic plan and represents a lot of work. I think Jackie was saying that if the Stakeholders don't maintain interest and reevaluate annually, CTIP will not move forward. Sources of funding always change and there is never enough, but the plan needs a champion to make it happen.

Comment: Another Stakeholder agreed that it was important for Stakeholders to meet regularly to promote CTIP.

Comment: This is an excellent subarea look at transportation priorities. I sit on the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) where four counties competed for \$100 million in transportation funding. Although the Northgate project that was proposed was not funded, it was highlighted as a priority and the PSRC has an urban focus.

Question: There is intra-city competition for transportation funding. How will SDOT ensure that CTIP priorities remain relevant priorities? Is there a staff person assigned to advocating for these projects?

Response (Tony Mazzella): I talk frequently with people in our capital programs and resource development areas. The way we are currently structured, a project manager like me stays involved with the evolution of the plan to the implementation stage. I anticipate that I will be involved with funding and implementation for CTIP projects. We have also tried to keep the Northgate recommendations compatible with the CIP's own evolution and ranking criteria so that high priorities in CTIP can do well in CIP. 5th Ave. NE and Northgate Way is promoted as a high priority in CTIP but also within SDOT. There is a lot of value in having prioritized projects and programs in CTIP and those priorities have been well valued in the SDOT system. We are in a strong position.

Comment (David Harrison): Let's flag that issue for subcommittee.

Technical Urban Design Guidelines

Lyle Bicknell of DPD reviewed the Technical Urban Design Guidelines (handout). He described the guidelines as a comprehensive package that captured the variety of modes of achieving the design intent, such as excellent bike connections, lighting, and street crossings, and that provided detailed direction to private developers on their improvements. In response to a question, Mr. Bicknell explained that the guidelines were enforced by providing guidance to the Design Commission for public projects and to the Design Review Board for private developers.

Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel – 60% Design

Tom Fawthrop, SPU, presented the 60% design for the Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel (copies of the 60% Design PowerPoint presentation were in Stakeholder packets). He reviewed the five key issues that had required follow-up after the last Stakeholders meeting and how they had been addressed:

1. Desire for access to site from 100th

Mr. Fawthrop explained that the design team had found that a stairway at 3rd Ave. NE and NE 100th St. would be steep and expensive and that it would create walls. Instead they drew the entrance plaza at the corner of Northgate Commons south that swept in more

from 3rd Ave. NE. He also noted that the stairwell access point on NE 100th St. near Group Health Hospital was part of the basic bid.

2. Enhance qualities of pedestrian experience

Mr. Fawthrop described benches, railings, and lighting features that would enhance the qualities of the pedestrian experience. He also described the design team's work to make pedestrian access to the channel visible.

3. Increase variability in walls (both wall type and slope)

Mr. Fawthrop and Peggy Gaynor, Gaynor Inc., described the ongoing design of green walls and concrete walls to create two separate experiences: one a softer, more natural experience and the other more urban experience. They noted the lineal feet of green walls had been increased since the last Stakeholders meeting. Ms. Gaynor also described the idea of creating wetlands behind weirs and meandering channels.

4. Create more variability in the water quality channel

Mr. Fawthrop explained that certain locations in the channel provided opportunities for water noise and that there was a series of ponds and shallow areas. He said the design team wanted to create a sense of pacing and harmony through the channel. He said the broader upper area would have a little island.

5. Use more natural materials for low-flow channel

Mr. Fawthrop described the use of natural materials and said that by shifting the materials a meander could be created. He said that the streambed would be 18 inches wide in some places and up to a few feet wide in others and that landscape materials would be integrated with the streambed.

Mr. Fawthrop then described the experience pedestrians would have while proceeding through the current site plan.

He reviewed the project schedule and noted that a Design Commission meeting was scheduled for July 6. He said that channel completion was scheduled for November 2007 and that it would take a year to establish vegetation. The park is scheduled to open in 2008.

Comments/Questions/Responses

Question: What is the difference in depth between low flow and high flow in the weir/wetland area?

Response (Tom Fawthrop): There is a maximum difference of ten inches between low flow and high flow over the weirs.

Response (Miranda Maupin): The ten inch maximum is what we are looking at for water quality treatment, but with storm flow we might see variability up to three feet.

Comment: Skateboarders will want to use the concrete benches.

Response (Tom Fawthrop): We are considering options such as angling the benches and making each bench only about four feet long. Also, putting notches along a bench can discourage skateboards.

Question: Thank you for improving pedestrian access. Is that center line the only way to access the Lorig project?

Response (Tom Fawthrop): There are three access points there.

Comment: That is great. More access is good.

Art for Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel

Benson Shaw presented his designs for three art installations at the Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel. He described the themes and metaphors that had guided the designs and how the pieces would integrate with the landscape.

Comments/Questions/Responses

Question: I just attended an earthquake preparedness workshop. What would happen in an earthquake?

Response (Benson Shaw): The suspended “storm” piece is perforated, lightweight aluminum that is secured by very strong cables and strong posts. All of the pieces are able to move a bit in the wind. They will be designed with specifications from engineers to ensure their safety.

Question: How tall are the poles?

Response (Benson Shaw): The tallest pole is 35 feet. There is no vegetation shown in the drawing, but there will be vegetation around the posts.

Question: Who will fund the lighting that is incorporated into the art pieces? Will it be solar activated?

Response (Benson Shaw): There will need to be a big solar collector or a concealed collector on each piece, which will need a battery. The battery will run the lights at night. The lights are glowing LED lights and they are part of my project budget.

Question: People may be tempted to try to shimmy the poles. Are they shock resistant?

Response (Benson Shaw): I am working to space the balls on the poles so it is difficult to climb them.

Question: Will the spheres on the poles be all one color?

Response (Benson Shaw): No, the color will shift from top to bottom, and the balls will glisten and sparkle and be active in sunlight.

Comment: Thank you for making slightly controversial, interesting pieces.

Project Updates

Ms. Kirn provided project updates on the South Lot, Northgate Mall, Wallace property development, and construction schedules (handout).

South Lot

Ms. Kirn noted that major grading of the nine-acre site was slated to begin in June. She said that Walsh Construction would do the digging for Lorig, ERA Care, and the Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel. Seattle City light will upgrade the electrical system.

She explained that the legal transfer of roughly five acres from Simon to Lorig would be finalized on June 1, 2006 and that all permits would be obtained by that date.

In response to a question, Richard Loo of Lorig said that the cinema had a seating capacity of 3200. He said that the development contained 278 rental housing units, including 45 two-bedroom units. The rest were split between one-bedroom and studio units. He said the development also contained 109 condominiums, including 20 studios. The rest were split between one- and two-bedroom units. He said that the development included 850 parking spaces.

Comments/Questions/Responses

Question: Are 850 parking spaces enough to handle all the park-and-ride and transit users?

Response (Richard Loo): We meet the zoning requirements.

Response (Jackie Kirn): We have done usage modeling which we presented to the Stakeholders. We studied how parking could be used effectively. The parking plan for this development fits our projections.

Question: Who is currently breaking up concrete in the area?

Response (Jackie Kirn): Those materials are being removed for the 5th Ave. NE streetscape project. The materials are being stored there temporarily, but they will be removed for recycling and disposal.

Question: Is investigative exploration being done?

Response (Jackie Kirn): Yes, potholing is being done. There was an announcement about that.

Question: Why was Walsh Construction chosen for this work? Was there a competitive bidding process?

Response (Nancy Ahern): We used a state law that permits governments to advertise that the competitive bidding process is not going to be applied. We advertised in the *Daily Journal of Commerce*. In this instance, special conditions necessitated the use of only one contractor to minimize disruption to the community and to ensure the most efficient grading process. The main motivation was to get the work coordinated on the three separate parcels. The prevailing wage will apply. Phase 2 construction will be done as a public work that will go out under competitive bidding. We would be happy to provide more information about the contracting process if you like.

Comment: Shoreline Councilmembers and staff have been doing a “walkabout” on Aurora, checking with businesses to find out how they are being affected by the Phase 1 project. Some business people want to receive email updates. Is this something the City could do, if you’re not already?

Response (Jackie Kirn): That is a good idea. We are planning a walkabout to businesses in the area in advance of the project and will continue to do them periodically after that.

Northgate Mall

Ms. Kirn referred to the cost overruns on the Northgate Mall expansion project, noting that the City had had similar experiences recently because of the high cost of fuel. She said that it was important because acquiring the park site depended on King County supplying replacement parking. She said that the Lorig parking would be available to King County for long-term lease but that the plan included shared parking with Simon as well. She said that the parking issue

would have to be resolved before King County could sell the park to the City, but that the City was optimistic about finding a solution.

Wallace Property Development

Kevin Wallace gave a detailed presentation on the final design of his development, noting that the final Design Review Board review was scheduled for June 5. He invited all Stakeholders to attend.

Comments/Questions/Responses

Question: I thought the right turn lane on 5th Ave. NE approaching Northgate way was going to be lengthened, but it looks the same length.

Response (Jackie Kirn): That is a City project that is not yet funded.

Question: Would that lengthening cut into the Wallace property?

Response (Jackie Kirn): We are coordinating with Wallace. There is enough setback to allow the improvement.

Question: Do you know who the anchor tenant will be or what type of business it will be?

Response (Kevin Wallace): We are close to finalizing the anchor tenant and will tell you at the next meeting. It is a consumer products retail establishment.

Question: It sounds fabulous; I am impressed. Is the stormwater detention designed for a 100 year storm? What is the design requirement?

Response (Kevin Wallace): Call me and I can tell you. The civil engineer works on that.

Response (Nancy Ahern): They will apply the code relative to water quality.

Construction Schedules

Ms. Kirn reviewed the construction schedules in the handout.

Report on Implementation of the Northgate Open Space & Pedestrian Connections Plan

Mr. Bicknell and Jeff Benesi of Hewitt Architects reported on the implementation of the Northgate Open Space & Pedestrian Connections Plan. They described specific projects that were in the early stages of planning.

Comments/Questions/Responses

Comment: Automobiles will not be allowed at the new park at NE 112th and 5th Ave. NE, correct?

Response (Lyle Bicknell): There is no intention to allow auto traffic. Improvements are planned to make it better for pedestrians and bicycles.

Comment: The proposed park should be a place for retired people to relax and for children to play. That area needs green space and activity.

Response (Lyle Bicknell): We were struck by the large size of the property. The idea is to incorporate a variety of uses to meet the needs of senior citizens and children.

Comment: Please think about the need for grocery stores that are pedestrian-accessible in the area.

Response (Lyle Bicknell): Our intention is to create retail that local residents use.

Response (Jackie Kirn): One reason for doing this planning now is that properties in the area are being redeveloped and we want to support uses, such as retail, that would relate well to the proposed park. Zoning changes are needed to allow those kinds of uses. We want Stakeholder input on these issues, and we are considering holding a planning and design workshop in the fall to get your ideas early in the process. We will make a proposal at the next meeting.

Question: What difference would the zoning change make?

Response (Kristian Kofoed, SDOT): Rezoning would increase the amount of commercial allowed. It may also increase the height limit.

Comment: Please keep us informed about property development.

Potential Future Issues and Projects at Northgate

Ms. Kirn reviewed several potential future issues and projects that might be of interest to the Stakeholders (handout). She proposed that the Stakeholders provide input on these issues and projects via a series of meetings:

- Northgate Stakeholder planning and design workshops – (first one Fall 2006, additional workshops to be scheduled)
- Northgate Stakeholder meetings (June 27 and Fall 2006, 2-3) meetings in 2007

Alice Shorett, facilitator, referred to discussions at and before the last Stakeholders meeting regarding the Stakeholders future involvement with potential issues and projects around Northgate. She said that the City was interested in having the Stakeholders remain involved in some way. She said that there seemed to be a lot of interest among the Stakeholders as well, but perhaps meeting less often, with Community Forums and opportunities for informal input. She explained that Vicki King of Triangle Associates would call each Stakeholder individually to ask for ideas about how to stay involved and to propose options for the future. She said that the Mayor's office and the City Council would also be consulted.

Ms. Kirn said that the meeting calendar would be updated for the Stakeholders reference.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Meeting Attendance

Representatives and Alternates of the **Northgate Stakeholders Group** in attendance were:

Metro/King County: Rep. Ron Posthuma

Haller Lake Community Club: Rep. Velva Maye

Pinehurst Community Council: Rep. Lorna Mrachek

Victory Heights Community Council: Rep. Brad Cummings, Alt. Molly Burke

Thornton Creek Alliance: Alt. Cheryl Klinker

Thornton Creek Legal Defense Fund: Rep. Janet Way

North Seattle Community College: Rep. Ron LaFayette, Alt. Bruce Kieser

Northwest Hospital: Rep. Chris Roth

Owners of Three or More Acres: Rep. Kevin Wallace

Renters/Condominium Owners: Rep. Brad Mason, Alt. Rick Kosterman

Multi-Family Housing Developers: Rep. Colleen Mills

Businesses Outside the Mall: Rep. Michelle Rupp

Labor: Rep. David Hellene

At-large: Rep. Shawn Olesen, Alt. Barbara Maxwell

At-large: Rep. Marilyn Firlotte

Members of the Triangle Associates facilitation team included David Harrison, Alice Shorett, and Ellen Blair.